



Holding The

Threads Of Freedom

Shabbat Shirah 2021

congregation
bet haverim



SHABBAT SHIRAH 5781

Friday, January 29, 2021

Holding the Threads of Freedom

After a challenging four years, with this past year of the pandemic the most tumultuous, we find comfort in the triumph that the Hebrews experience as they escape *Mitzrayim*, the narrow places. With some of the intensity abated, we are still left holding the threads of freedom and democracy. Is it possible to use these remaining threads to stitch our country back to wholeness? Might we weave a future that envisions a more equitable, just, and earth-tending America?


Join us for CBH's Shabbat Shirah Service, where music and justice are at the center. Let the Israelite Exodus journey – along with the dynamic tapestry of CBH's music – inspire an active hope that invests in what it takes to live into this future.

PART 1 ♦ PREPARING FOR THE JOURNEY

*Leaving **Mitzrayim**, the narrow place,
we need to be aware of who we were
and turn towards who we can become.
We rely on our ancient sacred texts and spiritual gifts
to prepare us to meet the Expanse.*

Prelude: Terk (Yoducha Rayonai)*

Welcome



*On the day we are together again
I will pull you in close, like a hoop with no end
On the day we are together again*

– Excerpt, On the Day

Be Here Now

Ray LaMontagne

Don't let your mind get weary
And confused, your will be still, don't try
Don't let your heart get heavy
Child, inside you there's a strength that lies

Don't let your soul get lonely,
Child, it's only time, it will go by
Don't look for love in faces, places
It's in you, that's where you'll find
Kindness

Be, be here now, be here now

Don't lose your faith in me and
I will try not to lose faith in you
Don't put your trust in walls 'cause
Walls will only crush you when they fall

Be, be here now, be here now

Sanctuary

Eliza Gilkyson

Yeah, though I walk through the valley of the
shadow

Thou art with me

Though my heart's been torn on fields of
battle

Thou art with me

Though my trust is gone and my faith not near
In love's sanctuary thou art with me

Through desolation's fire and fear's dark
thunder

Thou art with me

Through the sea of desires that drag me under
Thou art with me

Though I've been traded in like a souvenir
In love's sanctuary thou art with me

Through the doubter's gloom and the cynic's
sneer

Thou art with me

In the crowded rooms of a mind unclear
Thou art with me

Though I'll walk for a while down a trail of tears
In love's sanctuary thou art with me

Tzama Nafshi (Psalm 42)

Joey Weisenberg

K'ayal ta'arog al afikei mayim
Kein nafshi ta'arog elecha Elohim
Tzama nafshi l'Elohim, l'El chai
Tzama nafshi

As a deer longs for streams of water
So may my soul long for you, divine one
My soul is thirsty for God, for the living God

Im Atah / Shabbos Kodesh

R. Nachman of Bratslav (melody)

Im atah ma'amin sheyecholin l'kalkeil
ta'amin sheyecholin l'takein

If you believe you can break it,
you must believe you can fix it

Na Gibor

Zach Fredman and Shir Yaakov, The Epichorus (music); R. Nehunya ben HaKana (text)

Ana b'choach g'dulat yemincha tatir tz'rura	We beg you, with the strength and greatness of your right arm
Kabel rinat am'cha sagveinu tahareinu nora	Untangle our knotted fate, accept your people's song, elevate and purify us
Na gibor dorshei yichudcha k'avavat shomrem	Please, heroic one, those who pursue your uniqueness – guard them as the pupil of an eye

Shalom Aleichem

Siddur, page 13

Candle Lighting

Siddur, page 5

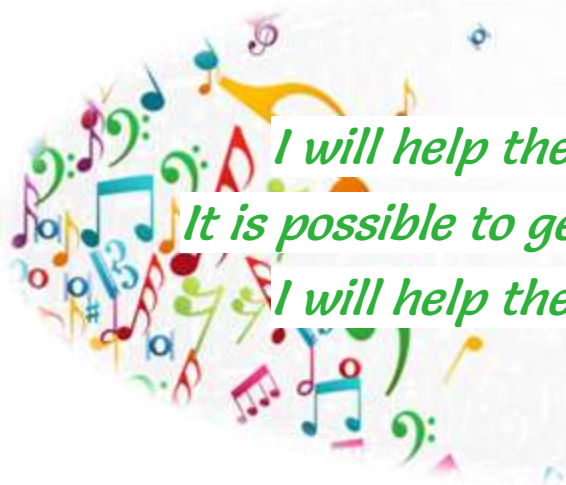
Shema

Siddur, page 65

PART 2 ♦ CROSSING TO FREEDOM

*When day comes we ask ourselves,
where can we find light in this never-ending shade?
The loss we carry, a sea we must wade
We've braved the belly of the beast
We've learned that quiet isn't always peace
And the norms and notions of what just is
Isn't always just-ice
And yet the dawn is ours
Before we knew it
Somehow we do it
Somehow we've weathered and witnessed
a nation that isn't broken but simply unfinished*

– Excerpt, The Hill We Climb, Amanda Gorman



I will help the strangers I meet

It is possible to get back on our feet

I will help the strangers I meet

– Excerpt, On the Day

Follow the Drinking Gourd

Traditional African American Folk Song

Follow the drinking gourd
Follow the drinking gourd
For the old man is a-waiting for to carry you to freedom
Follow the drinking gourd

When the sun comes back and the first quail calls
Follow the drinking gourd
For the old man is a-waiting for to carry you to freedom
Follow the drinking gourd

Well the riverbank makes a mighty good road
The dead trees will show you the way
Left foot, peg foot, traveling on
Follow the drinking gourd

Where the great big river meets the little river
Follow the drinking gourd
For the old man is a-waiting for to carry you to freedom
Follow the drinking gourd

Mi Chamocha / Wade in the Water

Siddur, page 79 / Traditional African American Folk Song

Wade in the water
Wade in the water, children
Wade in the water
God's gonna trouble the water

Who are those children all dressed in red?
God's gonna trouble the water
Must be the ones that Moses led
God's gonna trouble the water

Who are those children all dressed in white?
God's gonna trouble the water
Must be the ones of the Israelites
God's gonna trouble the water

Ken Es Akeyo de la Meniana / Wayfaring Stranger

Sephardic / American Folk Tunes

Ken es akeyo do la meniana
ken al'ombra kantamos
O son las 'streyas de la meniana
o son los ojos del mi amor
Who is this of a morning
to whose shadow we sing?
Perhaps the morning stars,
or the eyes of my beloved?

No son las 'streyas de la meniana
i no son los ojos del mi amor
O es esto un verjel verdi
ke arelumbra me korason
It is not the morning stars
nor the eyes of my love
Is it a green orchard
that illuminates my heart?

I am a poor wayfaring stranger
Traveling through this world of woe

Yet there's no sickness, toil nor danger
To that bright world to which I go
I know dark clouds will gather round me

I know my way is rough and steep
But golden fields lay out before me
Where God's redeemed shall ever weep

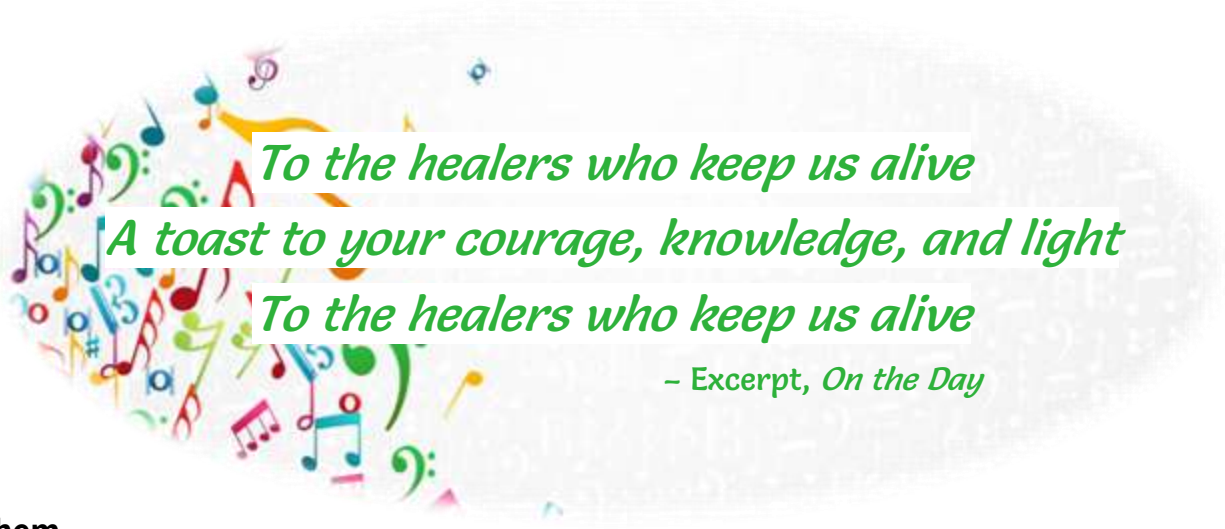
I'm going back to see my mother
I'm going back no more to roam

I'm just a-goin' over Jordan
I'm just a-goin' over home

PART 3 ♦ OUR COUNTRY TODAY: WEAVING THE THREADS

*And so we lift our gazes not to what stands between us
but what stands before us
We close the divide because we know, to put our future first,
we must first put our differences aside
We lay down our arms so we can reach out our arms to one another
We seek harm to none and harmony for all
Let the globe, if nothing else, say this is true:
That even as we grieved, we grew
That even as we hurt, we hoped
That even as we tired, we tried
That we'll forever be tied together, victorious
Not because we will never again know defeat
but because we will never again sow division*

– Excerpt, *The Hill We Climb*, Amanda Gorman



*To the healers who keep us alive
A toast to your courage, knowledge, and light*

To the healers who keep us alive

– Excerpt, On the Day

Anthem

Leonard Cohen

The birds they sang at the break of day
Start again, I heard them say
Don't dwell on what has passed away
Or what is yet to be

Yeah, the wars they will be fought again
The holy dove, she will be caught again
Bought and sold and bought again
The dove is never free

Ring the bells that still can ring
Forget your perfect offering
There is a crack, a crack in everything
That's how the light gets in

We asked for signs, the signs were sent
The birth betrayed, the marriage spent
Yeah, the widowhood of every government
Signs for all to see

I can't run no more with that lawless crowd
While the killers in high places say their prayers out loud
But they've summoned, they've summoned up a
thundercloud
And they're going to hear from me

Ring the bells that still can ring
Forget your perfect offering
There is a crack, a crack in everything
That's how the light gets in

You can add up the parts, you won't get the sum
You can strike up the march, there is no drum
Every heart, every heart to love will come
But like a refugee

Ring the bells that still can ring
Forget your perfect offering
There is a crack, a crack in everything
That's how the light gets in

Mad World / Kol Ha'Olam Kulo

Roland Orzabal / R. Nachman of Bratslav (text), Baruch Chait (music)

All around me are familiar faces
Worn out places, worn out faces
Bright and early for the daily races
Going nowhere, going nowhere

And the tears are filling up their glasses
No expression, no expression
And in my head I want to drown my sorrow
No tomorrow, no tomorrow

And I find it kind of funny
I find it kind of sad
The dreams in which I'm dying
Are the best I've ever had

And I find it hard to tell you
I find it hard to take
When people run in circles
It's a very, very
Mad world, mad world

Children waiting for the day they feel good
Happy birthday, happy birthday
Made to feel the way that every child should
Sit and listen, sit and listen

Went to school and I was very nervous
No one knew me, no one knew me
Hello, teacher, tell me what's my lesson
Look right through me, look right through me

And I find it kind of funny...

Kol ha'olam kulo gesher tzar me'od
V'ha'ikar lo l'fached klal

The entire world is a very narrow bridge
The essential thing is to have no fear at all

If I Had a Hammer

Pete Seeger and Lee Hayes

If I had a hammer, I'd hammer in the morning
I'd hammer in the evening, all over this land
I'd hammer out danger, I'd hammer out warning
I'd hammer out love between my brothers and my sisters, all over this land

Read what [Peter Yarrow writes about why "If I had a Hammer" is Jewish music](#)
in *Moment* magazine's feature, [A Soundtrack of the Jewish People](#)

Shed a Little Light

James Taylor

Let us turn our thoughts today
To Martin Luther King
And recognize that there are ties between us
All men and women living on the Earth
Ties of hope and love, sister and brotherhood

That we are bound together
In our desire to see the world become
A place in which our children
Can grow free and strong

We are bound together
By the task that stands before us
And the road that lies ahead
We are bound and we are bound

There is a feeling like the clenching of a fist
There is a hunger in the center of the chest

There is a passage through the darkness and the mist
And though the body sleeps the heart will never rest

Shed a little light, oh Lord
So that we can see
Just a little light, oh Lord
Gonna stand it on up
Stand it on up, oh Lord
Gonna walk it on down
Shed a little light, oh Lord

Can't get no light from a dollar bill
Don't give me no light from a TV screen
When I open my eyes
I wanna drink my fill
From the well on the hill.
Do you know what I mean?

American Tune

Paul Simon

Many's the time I've been mistaken
And many times confused
Yes, and I've often felt forsaken
And certainly misused

Oh, but I'm all right, I'm all right
I'm just weary to my bones
Still, you don't expect to be bright and bon
vivant
So far away from home, so far away from home

I don't know a soul who's not been battered
I don't have a friend who feels at ease
I don't know a dream that's not been shattered
Or driven to its knees

Oh, but it's all right, it's all right
For we've lived so well so long
Still, when I think of the road we're traveling on
I wonder what went wrong
I can't help it, I wonder what's gone wrong

And I dreamed I was dying
And I dreamed that my soul rose unexpectedly
And looking back down at me
Smiled reassuringly

And I dreamed I was flying
And high above my eyes could clearly see
The Statue of Liberty
Sailing away to sea
And I dreamed I was flying

Oh, we come on the ship they call the Mayflower
We come on the ship that sailed the moon
We come in the age's most uncertain hour
And sing an American tune

Oh, it's all right, it's all right, it's all right
You can't be forever blessed
Still, tomorrow's going to be another working day
And I'm trying to get some rest
That's all, I'm trying to get some rest

Pulse

Arden Altino, Jerry Duplessis, Melissa Etheridge

Everybody's got a pain inside
Imaginary wounds they fight to hide
How can I hate them
When everybody's got a pulse

I dream in a world that wants my soul
That tells me if I hate I can control
But I don't believe it
I cannot conceive it
Because everybody's got a pulse

I am human, I am love
And my heart beats with my blood
Love will always win

Underneath the skin
Everybody's got a pulse
Once again I hang my head to cry
I can't find the reason why they died
We will find the answer
Blowing in the wind
That everybody's got a pulse

I am human, I am love
And my heart beats with my blood
Love will always win
Underneath the skin
Everybody's got a pulse

We Rise

Batya Levine

We rise, humbly hearted
Rise, we won't be divided
Rise, with spirit to guide us
Rise

In hope, in prayer, we find ourselves here
In hope, in prayer, we're right here!

We rise, all of the children
Rise, elders with wisdom
Rise, ancestors surround us
Rise!

We rise, up from the wreckage
Rise, with tears and with courage
Rise, fighting for life
Rise

Hashkiveinu Lullaby

Siddur, page 81; Will Robertson (music)

Hashkiveinu Adonai Eloheinu l'shalom
V'ha'amideinu malkeinu l'chaim
Ufros aleinu sukkat shlomecha

Help us to lie down, Adonai our God, in peace
And let us rise again, our sovereign, to life
Spread over us the shelter of your peace

Mi Shebeirach / El Na Refa Na La

Will Robertson

D'var Torah

Announcements

Part 4 ♦ The Tapestry of the Future

*If we're to live up to our own time
Then victory won't lie in the blade
But in all the bridges we've made
That is the promise to glade
The hill we climb If only we dare
It's because being American is more than a pride we inherit,
it's the past we step into and how we repair it...
If we merge mercy with might, and might with right,
then love becomes our legacy and change our children's birthright
So let us leave behind a country better than the one we were left with
Every breath from my bronze-pounded chest,
we will raise this wounded world into a wondrous one...
The new dawn blooms as we free it,
For there is always light if only we're brave enough to see it
If only we're brave enough to be it*

– Excerpt, *The Hill We Climb*, Amanda Gorman

Kaveh (Psalm 27)

Daniel Kieval

Al titneni b'nefesh tzarai
Kaveh El Adonai
Lach amar libi bakshu fanai
Kaveh El Adonai
Chazak v'yametz libecha
V'kaveh El Adonai

Don't let me get lost in my soul-suffering
I will trust in the wholeness of everything
My heart says, "I am looking for you!"
I will trust in the truth of the way things are
Fill your heart with power and courage
Teach me the way of Presence)

On the Day We Are Together Again

Siri Undlin (Humbird)

On the day we are together again
I will pull you in close like a hoop with no end
On the day we are together again

We will share the same table again
I will pass you the salt, the candlelight will bend
When we eat at the same table again

We will walk 'round the block hand in hand
We'll stop for a snack at the taco truck stand
We will walk 'round the block hand in hand

Someday we will go back to work
May we be among people who respect our worth
Someday we will go back to work

I will help the strangers I meet
It is possible to get back on our feet
I will help the strangers I meet

I will write you a letter for now
Oh, hope is a message that survives somehow
I will write you a letter for now

To the healers who keep us alive
Oh, a toast to your courage, to your knowledge
and light

To the healers who keep us alive

And the ones we love who are gone
We remember their stories, we sing the songs
For the ones we love who are gone

On the day we are together again
I will pull you in close like a hoop with no end
On the day we are together again

Prayer for the End of Hiding

As LGBTQ Jews, we are aware of the loss of integrity we suffer due to pressures of the larger society. We often feel forced into a dishonest presentation of ourselves, to ourselves and others. The LGBTQ individuals who feel they must pretend to be something that they are not, the Jews who feel they must be alienated from their tradition and community to win larger acceptance, both are victims of a theft of identity and integrity committed by the sexual, gender-identifying or religious majority.

Creator of the Universe, we ask that our hiding draw to an end, that we no longer feel we have to pretend, to promise falsely, to renounce ourselves, and that our fullest creative expression as Jews and as lesbian, gay, transgender, bisexual and queer people be among the blessings you bestow upon us. Amen.

Mourner's Kaddish

Siddur, page 131

Hold It High

Will Robertson

A million people in the streets tonight
Illuminated by the traffic lights
Holding their signs up high
Cameras rolling and the mics are on
Somebody's shouting through a megaphone
A message amplifies
That it's time to draw some lines

If you believe that love is the key
Lift it up, hold it high, hold it high
A message of peace and unity
Lift it up, hold it high, hold it high

Do you remember when they took a stand
Riding buses through Birmingham
Wearing their marching shoes
And even when all that hatred flowed
Out the end of a firehose
And they had so much to lose
They sang, "We shall not be moved"

If you believe you're just like me
Lift it up, hold it high, hold it high

Bending the arc toward dignity
Lift it up, hold it high, hold it high

A more perfect union, by and by
A more perfect union, if we try

The townspeople all answered the call
Out in front of Independence Hall
That day in early July
A man read from a document
That pushed back on the government
He held that parchment up high
To the bright Philadelphia sky

If you believe we all should be free
Lift it up, hold it high, hold it high
A nation conceived in liberty
Lift it up, hold it high, hold it high
If you believe that love is the key
Lift it up, hold it high, hold it high
A message of peace and unity
Lift it up, hold it high, hold it high

We all live in the same "house," we all must be part of the effort to hold down our little house. When you see something that is not right, not fair, not just... do something about it. Say something. Have the courage. Have the backbone. Get in the way. Walk with the wind. It's all going to work out.

– Representative John Lewis

Gratitude & Resources

With great humility and gratitude, we remember the incredible musical gatherings of Shabbat Shirahs at CBH over the years. It has been the honor of a lifetime to create these unique musical explorations of the story of oppression and liberation with Rabbi Josh and Will Robertson.

The collective ruach of Chorus, Band, Strings, Congregation, and Guests is worth remembering with wondrous gratitude. We are blessed beyond measure that CBH can point to an [entire catalog of music recordings/albums](#) that we were able to draw on for this year's service while we shelter in place/peace.

Please continue to utilize these resources as this music is a thread that holds us to our past and future. – Gayanne

Check out our newest album, Red Thread!



Congregation Bet Haverim Chorus, Band and Strings

Will Robertson, Producer

Gayanne Geurin, Music Director

Joshua Lesser, Senior Rabbi

Atlanta, GA 2020

We greatly appreciate your support of our music program!

DONATE

Congregation Bet Haverim | 2074 Lavista Road, Atlanta, GA 30329
Mailing address: PO Box 29548, Atlanta, GA 30359
404-315-6446 | admin@cbhatlanta.org

congregation
bet haverim 